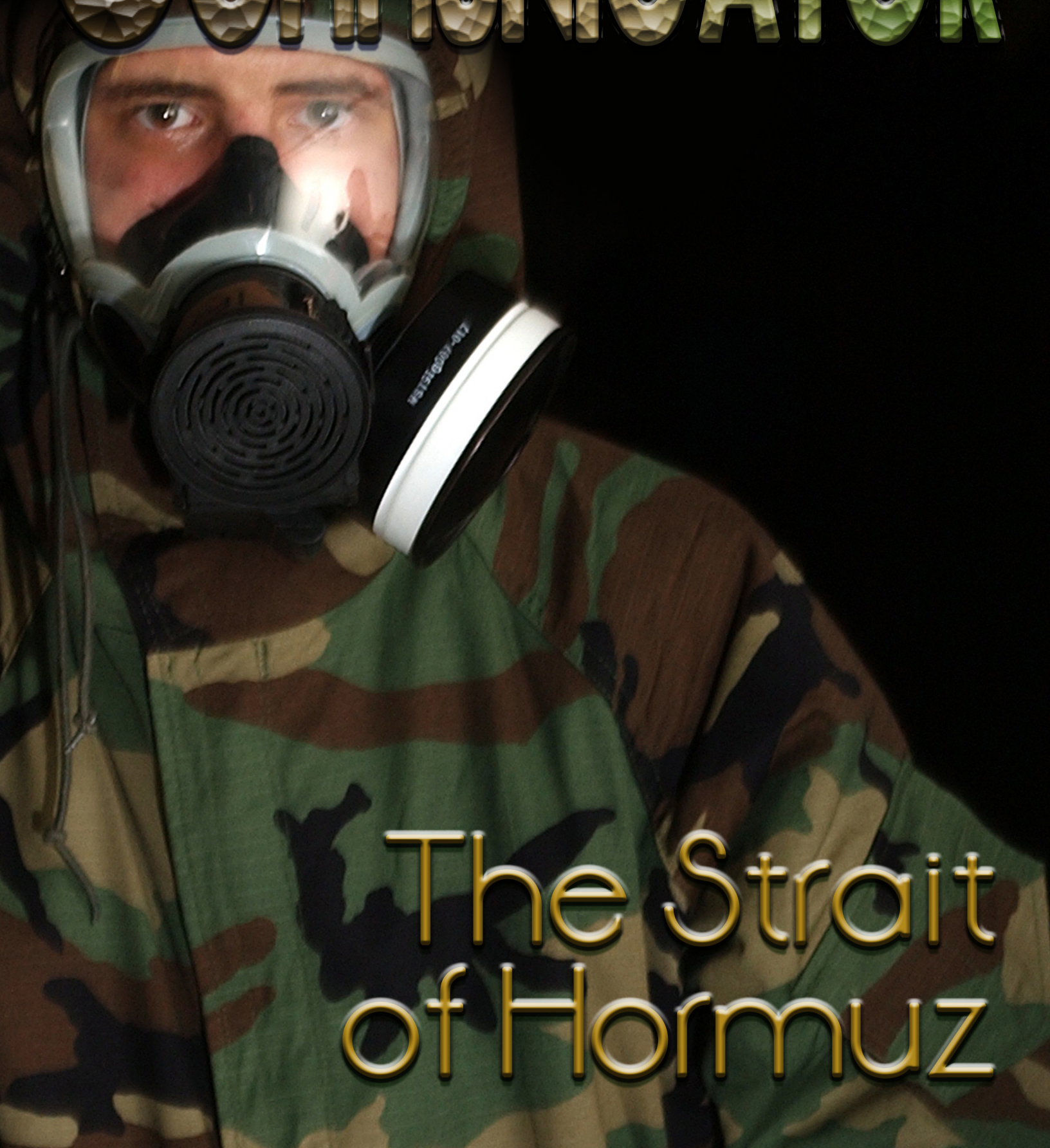


THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR



The Strait of Hormuz



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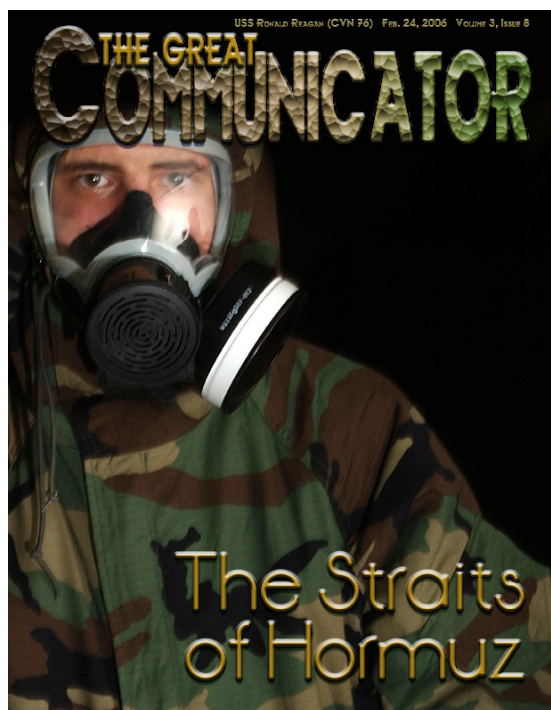
Editor
JO2 Stephanie Senn



Enjoying a well deserved break

A plane captain watches the sunset from the cockpit of an F/A-18E Super Hornet on the flight deck of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Reagan is currently deployed as part of a routine rotation of U.S. maritime forces in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the region. Photo by AN (AW) Daisy Abonza.

On the front cover



Cover photo by
PH3 Chris Blachly

Aviation Ordnanceman Airman Billy Skinner, from Cincinnati, Ohio, conducts an inspection of damage control fittings outfitted in an Advanced Chemical Protective Garment (ACPG) as part of Repair Locker One Fox-trot's external survey team during a simulated Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) general quarters drill.

This newspaper is an authorized publication for military members on board USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Contents of The Great Communicator are not the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the United States Navy.

Staff Writers

PH3 (AW)
Aaron Burden
LI3 Paul Ahlers
PHAN
Lawrence
Davis

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Reagan Strike Group transits Strait of Hormuz

By PHAN Lawrence Davis

Staff Writer

"Now set modified Zebra third deck and below," was called away on Feb. 20, and it marked the beginning of USS Ronald Reagan's (CVN 76) transit through the Strait of Hormuz, the entrance to the Persian Gulf.

The USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) Carrier Strike Group relieved USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71), which had been on station in the Gulf since November. Reagan will remain on station for the next several months.

According to Cmdr. Eric Patton, Reagan's Navigator, there were many preparations made and precautions taken before the actual transit.

"We did a lot of research on the area and reviewed and briefed the Captain on our charts and all the dangers several days prior in

order to make sure that we were prepared to enter the Strait," said Patten.

According to Patten, the Strait is notorious for large amounts of merchant ship traffic.

"Whenever you're in a confined area with lots of shipping you're always worried about collision," said Patton. "To help us out, they've created a traffic separation

Accompanied by the guided missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain (CG 57), USS Decatur (DDG 73), and USNS Rainier (T-AOE 7), Reagan began its initial transit through the Strait around 1:30 a.m. Feb. 21 at a set speed of 25 knots.

"Whenever you go through the Strait, you want to be at a faster speed so you get through quicker,"

"Whenever you go through the Straits, you want to be at a faster speed so you get through quicker."

***-- Cmdr. Eric Patton,
Navigator***

scheme that's just like driving on the freeway, where we're on one side they're on the other." "It was a very safe and orderly transit."

said Patton.

The Strait of Hormuz is a strategic location because 25 percent of the world's oil supply

transits through the narrow passage.

"With extra look outs, night vision devices, a watch on the radio communicating with other merchants, four helicopters in circulation and operations on the combat side of things, the transit was fairly a busy ship event," said Patton.

According to Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Ashley Hassell, all of the ship's gun mounts surrounding the flight deck were armed during the transit.

"We usually stand about a five hour watch out there, but with the transit, we were out there for six," said Hassell. "I was very confident about my team. They are all highly trained."

"All in all, the transit was very safe and successful and the Reagan now on station and ready for action," said Patton.

Open Mic Night a hit among crew and embarked airwing



PH3 (AW) Aaron Burden

Listening intently to the utterances of their shipmates, Sailors gather on the mess decks of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) for a night of poetry and reading as the Ronald Reagan Strike Group Diversity Committee hosts an open microphone night. Reagan is currently deployed as part of a routine rotation of U.S. maritime forces in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the region.

By PH3 (AW) Aaron Burden

Staff Writer

Low lights, mellow jazz and flickering candles -- an ambiance typical of an open microphone night found at a local club. Finding the same atmosphere aboard an aircraft carrier may seem a bit odd to some, but for the Sailors who attended USS Ronald Reagan's (CVN 76) "Open Mic" night Feb. 19, it was a breath of fresh air.

The event was sponsored by the Ronald Reagan Strike Group Diversity Committee, and featured original songs, poetry, hip-hop and spoken word written by individual Sailors and shared with the crew.

The night was born from a brainstorm of ways to celebrate Black History Month with the crew. Members of the diversity committee wanted to share the messages and poetry of black authors, and toyed with the idea of having slides inserted into the SITE television information channel that showcased influential African-American authors. After working through the logistics of the idea, the committee realized that it would be better to showcase the talented Sailors aboard and the "Open Mic" night was born.

"It seemed like a great way for crewmembers to express themselves," said Intelligence Specialist 2nd Class Chanel Sherman, Ronald

Mic ... Cont. on page 4

InsiderdotCom

Be a Critic

www.filmcritic.com

Filmcritic.com is one of the oldest, and certainly the liveliest, film and movie review destinations on the Web. This site hosts more than 6,000 movie reviews and feature stories contributed by 20-some critics located throughout the world. Celebrities ranging from Owen Wilson to Russ Meyer have been interviewed on the site. First select the now showing tab and pick a movie. On the right side of the review you will see who directed and produced the film and a list of stars, the year of release and the MPAA rating. Filmcritic.com also shows DVD release dates, reviews and lets you receive reviews by email.

Real Reviews

www.crankycritic.com

Crankycritic.com reviews movies based strictly on their entertainment value. This site has an interesting page called startalk, which contains interviews with tons of stars on specific movies. Crankycritic.com breaks the archives down into three groups, which makes the loading time a lot shorter than many websites. The site also has a message board for all your question and answer needs. This site is a great tool for finding out what's good, what's bad, and what everyone else thinks about a particular film. So next time you're headed out for a flick, check out this site before you leave to get the scoop.

This Day in History

1840 Adams begins arguments in Amistad case

On this day in 1840, former President John Quincy Adams begins to argue the Amistad case in front of the U.S. Supreme Court.

1927 Fox demonstrates Movietone sound

Fox demonstrated its new Movietone sound process to the media by filming a group of reporters in the morning, then showing the film, with sound, at night.

Mic

Continued from page 3

Reagan Diversity Committee President. "Our goal was to offer an intimate setting where this could happen."

Express themselves they did, as Sailors from all almost every command embarked on board took this unique opportunity to share their poetry, written word, song and even hip-hop and rap. Even though the subjects shared were as diverse as the participants, the common theme was emotion. Personal letters to unborn children, songs of religious conviction and open letters to ex-lovers echoed across the aft mess decks.

Attendance for the event mirrored the diversity of the

"It was wonderful to see the crew come together in such a unique setting."

— Yeoman 2nd Class

Keisha Franklin

artists. Sailors of every rank and background gathered together to experience this unique opportunity afforded them by their shipmates. Attendees also gained insight on a cultural phenomenon that began with the Harlem Renaissance and continues today all over the world.

"The turnout was great," said Yeoman 2nd Class Keisha Franklin, one of the event planners. "It was wonderful to see the crew come together in such a unique setting."

Because of the tremendous success of the event, plans are currently in the works for another "Open Mic" night in conjunction with Women's History Month in about two weeks. The next event will showcase may be expanded to include photographic and artistic slide shows.

"Ultimately, if the interest continues, the diversity committee would like to host an 'Open Mic' night every two weeks," said Chief Intelligence Specialist Jennifer Abrams, another event planner. "We would like to continue to have this avenue of self expression available to the crew."

WANTED CAPTIONS



Calling all comedians! So you think you're pretty funny, huh? Come up with an amusing, *appropriate* caption for this photo and send it to sennsd@cvm76.navy.mil with "Caption Contest" in the subject line. The winning caption will be posted in the next issue.

LAST ISSUE'S WINNERS

FIRST

These penicillin shots are getting ridiculous.

ATAN Matthew Bellittiere
VFA 22

SECOND

Five year physicals are now being held on the flight deck.

AOC (AW/SW) Richard Ogan
VFA 22



THIRD

Be vewy vewy quiet. I'm hunting Ordie chiefs.

PHI (AW/SW) John Lill
OPS/OP



DoD Helps to Launch Military Financial Education Program

By Steven Donald Smith,
American Forces
Press Service

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- A general lack of financial knowledge makes service members an ideal target for predatory money lenders, so the Defense Department is helping to do something about it, officials said here Feb. 16.

The Defense Department has partnered with the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD) Investor Education Foundation to launch the Military Financial Education Program. The NASD Foundation was started in 2003, and is part of the Defense Department's financial readiness campaign. NASD is the largest private-sector provider of financial regulatory services.

Task Force Navy Family Transitions

From Chief of Naval
Operations Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- Task Force Navy Family (TFNF) has transferred authority

and responsibility for continuing support of the Navy family to Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Fleet Readiness and Logistics (OPNAV N4) Feb. 15.

Since standing up last year, TFNF provided and set the stage for sustainable relief assistance for more than 90,000 Navy Sailors, family members, civilians and retirees in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma.

Forward Deployed ARG Arrives in Leyte to Provide Humanitarian Assistance

From Task Force 76
Public Affairs

LEYTE, Republic of Philippines (NNS) -- Sailors and Marines from the Forward Deployed Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) with elements of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), Joint Task Force (JTF) Balikatan and the USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54) arrived off the coast here Feb. 19 to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to the victims of a wide-sweeping mudslide.

The Forward Deployed ARG, 31st MEU, JTF Balikatan, part of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary

Brigade (3D MEB), and Curtis Wilbur, are conducting continuous ship-to-shore movements of relief supplies, including food, water and blankets.

GW Looking for 'The Biggest Loser'

By JOC (SW/AW/IUSS)
Henry W. Rice,
USS George Washington
Public Affairs

USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, At Sea (NNS) -- More than 200 USS George Washington (CVN 73) (GW) Sailors on 60 teams are involved in the GW 'Biggest Loser' Weight Loss Competition, a contest where the winning team is the one that loses the most combined weight.

The contest kicked off Dec. 17 and will end March 17.

USS Essex, USS Harpers Ferry and USS Curtis Wilbur Arrive to Help Mudslide Victims

By JO2 Corey Truax, USS
Essex Public Affairs

LEYTE, Republic of the Philippines (NNS) -- USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49), USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54) and elements of the 31st

Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), Joint Task Force (JTF) Balikatan arrived on station off the coast of Southern Leyte to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) Feb. 19 for victims of a recent mudslide there.

Essex and Harpers Ferry responded immediately to the Republic of the Philippines' request for humanitarian relief aid after the mudslide swept over the farming village Guinsahugon and two other nearby villages, about 420 miles southeast of Manila.

Both Essex and Harpers Ferry are part of the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force, based out of Sasebo, Japan.

SECNAV Visits USS Iwo Jima

By JOSN Remus E. Borisov,
Fleet Public Affairs Center
Atlantic

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- Secretary of the Navy Donald Winter arrived aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) Feb. 15, to meet and speak with Sailors during his first visit to Norfolk since being sworn in as the 74th Secretary of the Navy.

Winter arrived at the pier shortly before noon and met with Capt. Richard S. Callas, commanding officer of Iwo Jima, for a tour of the ship

and a reenlistment ceremony.

An all hands call following the ceremony gave Winter a chance to speak to the crew about his role as their new leader.

Winter spoke to Sailors about the Navy's role in the global war on terrorism and the humanitarian relief operations in terms of post-war reconstruction and disaster response.

Navy Teaches Teachers

By JO1 Frank E. Neely Jr.,
Fleet Public Affairs Center,
Pacific

CORONADO, Calif. (NNS) -- Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 10, the "Warhawks," hosted a tour of their squadron to members of Navy Recruiting District (NRD) Miami and 14 visitors from the Florida school districts, Feb. 15.

Commander, Navy Recruiting Command funded the trip as part of a weeklong visit for principals, teachers and guidance counselors to learn about the Navy and educate their students about what the Navy offers.

They asked about HS-10's safety procedures, the effectiveness of the equipment used, the qualifications required to perform certain tasks and if those qualifications transferred with Sailors who decide to get out of the Navy.

READER'S CHOICE

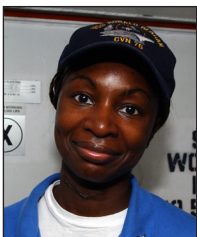
**What did you
do to relax
today?**



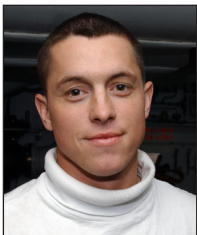
DC2 (SW) Brian Ledgerwood
"I read books."



Lt. J.g. Susan Gormley
"Watched foreign films and
drank hot chocolate."



A03 Lachana Shelton
"Thought about home and
my mom in Germany."



AD1 (AW) Christopher VanDorn
"I sat back and watched the
Olympics."

Letters to the Editor

Dear Crew,

Hey everyone, it's been a while. I hope you like the new magazine format. The CO likes it so much, he want it to come out three times a week, so starting Monday, it will. We've had to cut it down to eight pages, but you'll still get more of that Great Communicator you love.

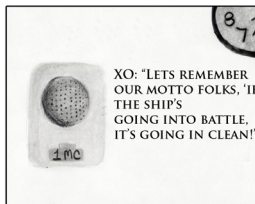
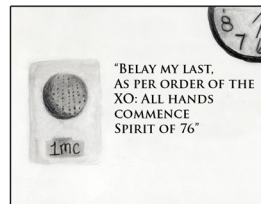
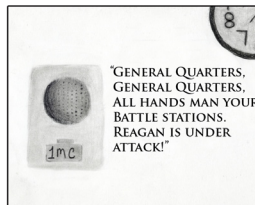
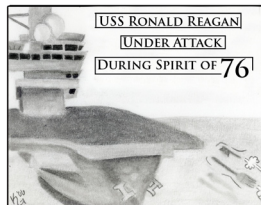
The caption contest participation was the best I've ever seen. I sure wish you guys would respond like that every time. I got about 25 submissions. Now, not all of them were clean enough to use, but I still got a chuckle before I deleted them. So keep 'em coming.

I'm going to introduce a few new elements to the Communicator. PHAN Gorby, one of our resident photographers, submitted a comic this issue. The CMC is going to use this corner once a week for "CMC's Corner." I also had to get rid of "Reel Time." I'm sorry, but there's just not room.

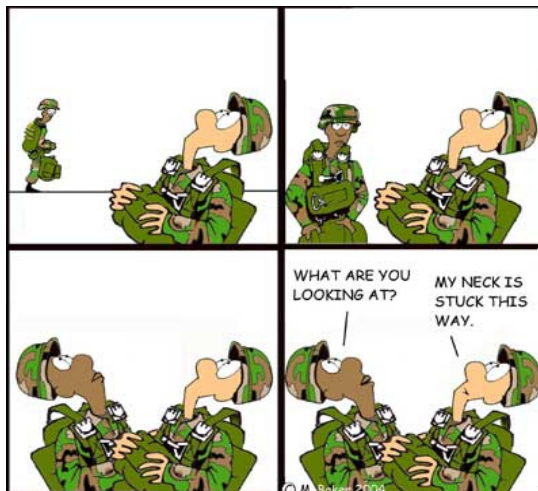
There are a few more changes coming, but I'll let it be surprise. So keep your eyes peeled and keep reading. Thanks, everyone!

Respectfully,
The Editor

Deckplates by PHAN (AW) Kathleen Gorby



Private Murphy by Mark Baker



Today's Movies

0830-1900

Ch. 2 - Serenity

Ch. 3 - Banger

Sisters

Ch. 4 - Duplex

Ch. 5 - The Fly

1900-0730

Ch. 2 - Serenity

Ch. 3 - Lost in

Translation

Ch. 4 - U.S.

Marshals

Tomorrow's Movies

0830-1900

Ch. 2 - The Greatest

Game Ever Played

Ch. 3 - Hope Springs

Ch. 4 - Fargo

Ch. 5 - Cursed

1900-0730

Ch. 2 - The Greatest

Game Ever Played

Ch. 3 - A lot like love

Ch. 4 - The Order

Ch. 5 - 50 First Dates

Just for Laughs

Comics provided by
Military.com

Sempertoons by Charles Wolf





SD

SAILOR'S of the DAY

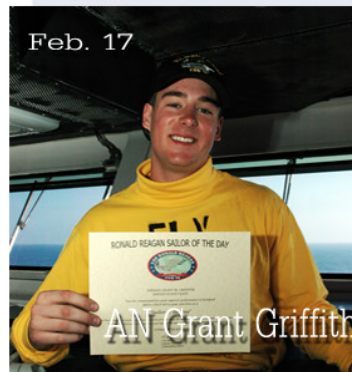


Feb. 16



Department: **Security**
Job Title: **Armer**
Where are you from? **Dingmans Ferry, Penn.**
What inspires you? **My father**
Why did you join the Navy? **Because of 911**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **My parents**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **Keep working hard**

Feb. 17



Department: **Air**
Job Title: **Aircraft Director**
Where are you from? **Lynnwood, Wash.**
What inspires you? **No answer**
Why did you join the Navy? **Travel, education**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **My father**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **No answer**

Feb. 18



Department: **VFA-115**
Job Title: **None**
Where are you from? **Riverton, Wy.**
What inspires you? **Music**
Why did you join the Navy? **Job opportunity**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **Myself**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **Keep on truckin'**

Department: **Deck**
Job Title: **Leading SN**
Where are you from? **Fresno, Calif.**
What inspires you? **Two stars on top of the anchor**
Why did you join the Navy? **To see the world**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **BM2 Tracey & BM1 Russo**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **Never give up**

Feb. 20



Feb. 21



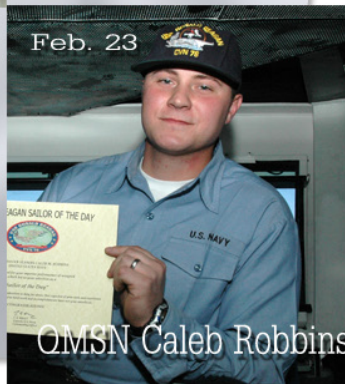
Department: **Supply**
Job Title: **Watch Capt.**
Where are you from? **Bronx, New York**
What inspires you? **My mother**
Why did you join the Navy? **Travel**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **My mother**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **Anything is possible if you believe**

Feb. 22



Department: **CVW-14**
Job Title: **Imagery Analyst**
Where are you from? **Berwick, Penn.**
What inspires you? **Jesus Christ**
Why did you join the Navy? **College**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **My parents**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **Stand for something or you'll fall for anything**

Feb. 23



Department: **Navigation**
Job Title: **Quartermaster**
Where are you from? **Winson, Ore.**
What inspires you? **My wife and daughter**
Why did you join the Navy? **No answer**
Who do you hold responsible for your success? **No answer**
What piece of advice would you pass on to others? **None**

QMSN Caleb Robbins





Be a good Shipmate and conserve potable water